Genealogical Society
of Washtenaw County, Mich., Inc.

WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY - Founded December 17, 1857 FEBRUARY 1995

WASHTENAW IMPRESSIONS

MISS DORIS ANNA BACH SIGNS WCHS SIGNATURE QUILT

Miss Doris Anna Bach (center), granddaughter of Philip and Anna Botsford Bach, signs WCHS's signature quilt recently at her home in Kalamazoo. Karen O'Neal, past president and museum restoration chair, is at left, President Patricia Austin, at right.

Miss Bach, a retired teacher, is a major donor of both heirlooms from her pioneer ancestors and funds to WCHS's museum effort.

The Anna Botsford Bach Home, 1422 West Liberty, is named for her grandmother who helped found it. Bach School is named for her grandfather, a long-time Ann Arbor merchant and school board president.

Anyone may sign the signature quilt for a donation of $20 per square. After all squares are signed, the U-M faculty women's quilting group will quilt it and it will be displayed at our Museum on Main Street.

Signature quilts are a time-honored way of raising money dating back to the 1800s. The Boston Female Society, families of Confederate soldiers and the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) all made signature quilts for their causes.

The WCHS quilt may be signed at general meetings or President Austin will be happy to bring it to you. Just call her at 663-5281.

KAREN'S COLUMN
WCHS GRANT PROPOSAL SEEKING MUSEUM FUNDS; BUILDING BOARD GRANTS ALL VARIANCES NEEDED

One of our members, Doug Kelley, has just completed a grant proposal to solicit funds for the Museum. It has been submitted to a number of funding sources. We are hopeful that many of them will be interested in our very worthwhile project.

Putting together the proposal packet was a big job. Doug estimates that he spent 60 hours on it. I think, if he really counted all the phone calls, meetings and discussion time involved, 60 hours might be a very conservative estimate!

It took a lot of hard work to get everything together, but when it was done it was an elegant and professional job.

It is something that we've known for a long time we needed to do, so it is a good feeling now that it is finished. Thanks so much, Doug, for pulling it all together and for doing it so expertly.

On December 20, WCHS appeared before the City of Ann Arbor's Building Board of Appeals to seek relief from compliance with several sections of the building code. (Structures of the 1830s were definitely not built with an eye to the future BOCA code of the 1990s.)

It was a very nice pre-holiday gift to be granted variances for all of our non-conforming code situations. Michelle Smay and David Evans of Quinn-Evans Architects ably negotiated us through the intricacies of the application and hearing process.

So, we are ready to go. We have the plans, the building permit, the necessary code variances, and funds to accomplish the next scope of work. What are waiting for? We are hoping the various building trades will be fitting us into their work schedules SOON!

Karen O'Neal, 665-2242

BLACK HISTORY EXHIBIT

WCHS is observing Black History Month with an exhibit on the "Underground Railroad: Traveling to Freedom." It will be in lower level glass cases at the Ann Arbor Public Library during February. The exhibit area is just outside the downstairs meeting room.

A.P. MARSHALL TO TALK ON YPSI BLACK HISTORY, UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

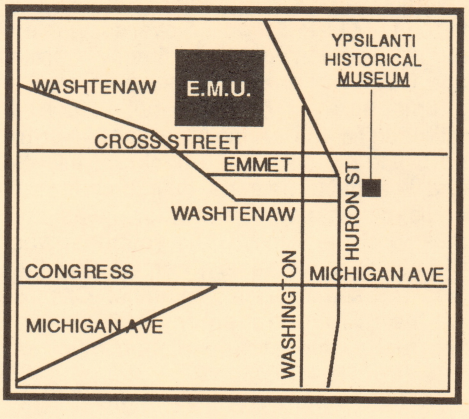
WCHS will commemorate Black History Month with a talk by A.P. Marshall, retired Eastern Michigan University professor, on "Some Blacks To Be Remembered" at 2 p.m. Sunday, February 19, at the Ypsilanti Historical Museum, 220 North Huron Street.

Professor Marshall, who retired from E.M.U. as professor of library services, in 1980, published a book in 1993, *Unconquered Souls: The History of the African American in Ypsilanti.*

In it, he relates the active role played by some Ypsilantians in the Underground Railroad and provides biographies of some of Ypsilanti's African Americans including Elijah P. McCoy, after whom the expression, "the real McCoy" is reputedly named.

(WCHS is also preparing an exhibit on the Underground Railroad that will be on display in the lower level glass cases at the Ann Arbor Public Library during February.)

The talk, to be followed with light refreshments, is open to the public free of charge. Some parking by museum and house next north, also in Presbyterian Church lot. Handicap ramp on south side of museum.



WCHS SPRING FUND RAISER TO BE BARN DANCE APRIL 7

WCHS's annual spring fund raiser will be an old-fashioned barn dance Friday, April 7, at--where else?--the Cobblestone Farm barn, 2781 Packard Road.

The Raisin Pickers Band will play for dancing. Robin Warner will call squares, contras and reels. He will teach the dances with walk throughs. There will also be waltzes and polkas.

There will be box lunches for all and a celebrity baked goods auction. Please mark your calendar and plan on country fun.

ANN ARBOR RAILROAD, PART II

ASHLEY LOST RAILROAD BUT IT KEEPS ROLLING

WCHS took a figurative second excursion on the Ann Arbor Railroad at its November meeting, conducted by Dan McClary of the Ann Arbor Railroad Technical and Historical Association.

In September 1993, McClary traced the history from the first thoughts of such a line in the 1840s up to about 1889 when it had been constructed to about Copemish on its way to Lake Michigan.

He returned last November to continue the saga, which he copiously illustrated with a remarkable collection of slides from his extensive research.

He started by showing the symbol of the railroad used after the mid-1890s and a picture of himself when, as a University of Michigan undergraduate, he had a summer job as brakeman in 1969. He was "leaning on the outrigger of a 1912 steam wreck crane at an Ann Arbor railroad wreck site on South State Street."

"James M. Ashley from Toledo founded the railroad. He had been a U.S. Congressman. He was the author of the 13th Amendment to abolish slavery as well as bills to abolish slavery in Washington, D.C. and impeach President Andrew Johnson.

"Johnson survived the impeachment by one vote and Ashley was 'on the outs' losing re-election in 1869. President Grant sent Ashley to Montana as territorial governor.

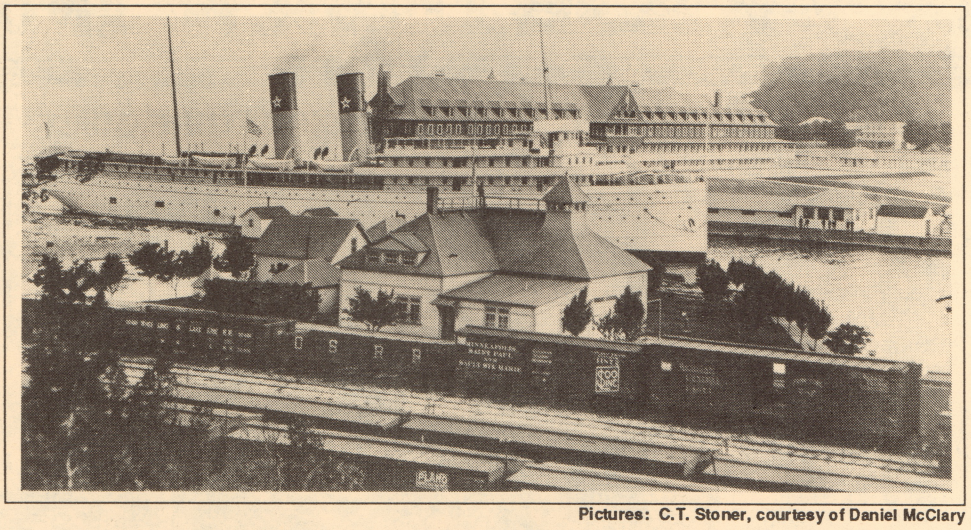
"After he came back to Toledo, Ashley sent his oldest son, James M. Ashley, Jr., to the U-M Law School. Governor Ashley found he couldn't get here directly by train and found out there had been an earlier attempt in Ann Arbor to build such a railroad.(Toledo, Ann Arbor and Northern). He bought up the bankrupt assets and, with his three sons, built the railroad.

His oldest son, James, Jr., was the muscle of the family. The youngest was Charles Sumner Ashley, named after the great U.S. senator, Charles Sumner. Charles left the railroad in the early 1890s, went into real estate and developed much of downtown Toledo.

"A contemporary Ashley relative, Thomas Ludlow Ashley, a 13-term congressman from Toledo, was a college roommate of President George Bush. When George Bush's son got into trouble a few years ago, George Bush went to 'Lud' Ashley, who was then involved in international and federal banking and who helped bail him out.

"Gov. Ashley and his sons built all the way to Copemish, west of Cadillac. Some East Coast investors and along with locally prominent citizens of Frankfort built the Frankfort and Southeastern to meet them.

Dan showed a slide of the first train of the Frankfort and Southeastern on July 4, 1889. At the Smithsonian in May he found the actual work order for the purchase of the two coaches on the back of the train.



Pictures: C.T. Stoner, courtesy of Daniel McClary

Frankfort Harbor, early 1900s: Railyard, Coast Guard station in foreground. Passenger steamer Northland entering. Royal Frontenac Hotel in background. The hotel built to rival Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island, burned in 1912.

They were painted Tuscan red and he now has complete interior details.

"They had a series of early Rogers 4-4-0 steam engines, very typical of equipment used back then."

He showed pictures of Governor Ashley when he was president of the Toledo, Ann Arbor and North Michigan Railway and of James, Jr., as superintendent of the railroad.

"We discussed in the slide show last year how James, Jr., led two different armed battles in building the railroad. One railroad wouldn't let him cross and had a hundred men with clubs. James, Jr., came back with 400 men and guns.

"When they went to cross at Howell, James, Jr.'s men blew out the other's track with dynamite and he got arrested for obstructing the U.S. mails. He was quite a character.

"The middle son, Harry W. (Henry Winfield, named after the Civil War general, Winfield Scott) was the family traitor.

"He married logging baron Wellington R. Burt's daughter and when bankruptcy occurred, he sided with his father-in-law against his father and brother, James, Jr. Even today, 100 years later, relatives won't talk about Harry.

"Harry and Burt's daughter are buried in a separate part of Woodlawn Cemetery in Toledo, not in the Ashley family plot.

The youngest son, Charles Sumner Ashley was the railway's attorney until going into real estate." Dan has a *circa* 1895 Toledo Bar Association picture of him.

"Ammi Wright, another logging baron who also formed Alma College, was on the railroad board up to the early turn of the century.

"The Pythian Castle in downtown Toledo became the headquarters in 1890 of the Toledo, Ann Arbor and North Michigan Railway. It's still there next to the Greyhound Bus Depot but abandoned.

"On an 1890 map the South Lyon branch line is still there, but the main line only goes to Copemish and they have the Frankfort and Southeastern as a connecting line. Two proposed car ferry routes are shown.

"John White, an early chief [civil] engineer, had a little problem with alcohol and was bounced out, but he came back as an assistant civil engineer in the 1890s.

"Henry Riggs, the railroad's chief civil engineer from 1890-95, was later dean of the U-M engineering school up to the 1940s. He was known as 'Daddy Riggs' and he was a co-founder of the Michigan Union.

"Riggs inspected the whole railway and found the road bed was mostly composed of sand, rough hewn ties and light weight rail. It was very poor track.

"He and White replaced the original wood trestle across the Huron River near North Main Street in Ann Arbor with the first curved metal bridge in the U.S. Even though Riggs recommended a heavier bridge, Ashley told him to build it to a lighter weight. Ashley got convinced by others that Riggs was overbuilding. This cost them dearly later on as trains became bigger and heavier.

"The Huron River metal bridge was done in the spring of 1892. Then Riggs and White started work on the car ferry docks at South Frankfort."

A view of the Huron River Bridge showed stock yard pens about where Lansky's used to be and where the Art Train is now stored. (There's a metal Ann Arbor caboose for sale there now.)

"The Ann Arbor Railroad this summer was filling in ballast around the Huron River Bridge because some of the old trestle pilings were sinking in. They also were replacing rusted girder bracing and putting

in new ties.

"A typical Ann Arbor passenger train had a baggage car, a railway post office car and one coach. That was pretty much their standard passenger train right up to the end of steam in the 1950s.

"They were also running a lot of excursion trains to lakes plus a lot of freight was going to Toledo. There were at least five or six lakes--Whitmore Lake, Zukey Lake at Lakeland, Lake Cadillac, Lake Mitchell (then called Big and Little Clam Lake), Lake George and Crystal Lake near Frankfort."

A map showed the Frankfort and Southeastern coming out of Frankfort on the north side of Betsie Bay down to Copemish where it tied into the Toledo, Ann Arbor and North Michigan Railway. Crystal City became Beulah. In 1892 they built the line to the south side of Betsie Bay, then known as South Frankfort, and now called Elberta."

"In November 1892 car ferry No. 1 was delivered. Most, if not all their car ferries were delivered in the winter. They had massive trouble with an empty new car ferry negotiating Lake Huron and Lake Michigan. Sometimes it took weeks to get there.

"While in transit from the Craig Shipyards in Toledo, car ferry No. 2 had metal plates that covered the wood hull that buckled in the ice. They had to go in for repairs in Port Huron.

"No. 1 was the world's first 'open water' car ferry. These were copied by the Russians on Lake Baikal and by others. It's not really the first car ferry--the Straits of Mackinac had the St. Clair but they don't consider crossing the strait as 'open water.' Frank Kirby, the famous boat architect, designed the St. Clair and Ann Arbor Nos. 1, 2 and 5.

"No. 1 and No. 2 originally had two stacks. One power plant and boilers ran the back screws, the other ran what they call a bow thruster.

"No. 1 was built in the Craig Shipyards in Toledo. I recently found a picture of the Craig Shipyards in the Toledo Public Library. In it they were building a similar car ferry for another railroad on Lake Erie. You could see the bow thruster prop they used to break up ice and help turn the boat. Later that boat, Shenango No. 2, was leased for a while to the Ann Arbor Railroad.

" They found the bow thrusters did not work too well. After three or four years, they took them off the first two Ann Arbor boats. They later used the boilers and engines from them to build boat No. 3."

A *circa* 1892 map showed the railway completed to Lake Michigan and one car ferry line over to Kewanee where they first got started, not their optimistic two lines. There was a little white spot on the map where the South Lyon branch used to be. That was abandoned in the spring of 1891.

"The people of South Lyon thought they were going to be the repair shops and home of the Toledo, Ann Arbor and North Michigan Railway. The railway originally intended to go toward Pontiac.

"But when they went the other direction to do car ferries, they abandoned that line.

"When word got out of the plan, the people of South Lyon had a town drunk on a Saturday night and did the old Civil War trick of ripping rails out, heating them in bonfires and bending them into 'iron neckties' around trees.

"Ashley, Jr., and company came early Sunday morning with 100 men on flat cars. Allegedly they had bought tickets and were passengers. Even though Gov. Ashley had sworn he would not run his railroad on Sundays.

"By the time South Lyon residents woke up the track was pulled up a mile or two out of town. They tried to go to court Monday morning to get an injunction but it was too late.

"Charles Sumner Ashley, the youngest son, wrote a beautiful letter, a copy of which I found in the Ann Arbor Public Library's newspaper microfilms where he did the best job of spin doctoring I've ever heard. He said 'We sold this line to the South Lyon and Northern Railroad. What they do with that track is their business. We don't know anything about it."

Dr. McClary showed car ferry No. 2 and an 1890s picture of Frankfort harbor with one ferry tied up and one in the slip. In back was a lumber yard and a sand hill that later was removed upon the building of the railroad's hotel (1899-1901).

"In March 1893, three months after boat No. 2 arrived, the railroad had a strike. It was the first railway strike under the new Interstate Commerce Commission and it was precedent setting at the time." He showed a picture of people, labeled 'strike on the Ann Arbor Railroad.'

"Logging barons Wellington R. Burt and Ammi Wright controlled the Cincinnati, Saginaw and Mackinac railroad line from Durand to Saginaw and Bay City and Burt was its treasurer. It was the only railroad in Michigan built for cash and it was Burt's logging money that did it.

"Burt had a boat named after him. Burt has a relative in Ann Arbor now whose name is also Wellington R. Burt. He has a business, Burt Forest Products on Felch Street.

"After the strike, the railroad went into bankruptcy in April 1893.

"When Wall Street got wind of the strike, they dropped the value of the railway's stock shares by three quarters of their value within one hour. I think they were worth $40 a share and went down to $10. Forty dollars was a lot of money then for a share of stock. The railroad had been doing real well until that time, especially after adding the car ferries.

"Burt, vice-president of the Ann Arbor, was appointed receiver. The first thing he did was get rid of Governor Ashley and his son, the battling, bruising Jim, Jr. He kept Harry because he was married to his daughter. That's what started the family feud."

On an 1894 pass, in the middle of bankruptcy, you could see H.W. Ashley's signature. He was still general manager. They are still using the name, 'Toledo, Ann Arbor and North Michigan Railway but they've added "and Steamship Lines." There is a picture of a car ferry on a pass. Some passes use other pictures--one had the then new U-M library.

"I found the plan and agreement to the reorganization of the Toledo, Ann Arbor and North Michigan Railway, dated September 1894. Burt reorganized it and turned it into, simply, the Ann Arbor Railroad. They used the same key herald symbol, just took off 'Toledo' and 'North Michigan and changed 'railway' to 'railroad.'

"Governor Ashley died September 16, 1896, while the railroad was in bankruptcy.

"The reason for the strike was his loyalty to his two oldest employees who did not want to join the new union. They had been with him since the beginning.

"Ashley said they were the best engineers on the line. They didn't have any accidents unlike some of the union members, and, if they wanted to stay with the railroad they could. The rest went on strike and he lost control of his railroad.

"Ashley tried again to go to Congress and didn't make it. He died in Alma, Michigan. I think he was visiting someone. He is buried in Woodlawn Cemetery in Toledo. Ashley Street in Ann Arbor was named after him.

"The railroad lost some of its engines in the bankruptcy. They were repossessed and resold. Burt started buying some new ones."

McClary showed photos of engines No. 45 and 46 and of No. 46 pulling a full 25-30 car train. They started getting air brakes at this time.

He recently found a car in the American Car and Foundry archives in St. Louis that

ON TO LAKE MICHIGAN BY HOOK OR BY CROOK

One of Dr. McClary's earliest pictures shows a train on a siding at Crystal Lake, pulled by one of the 1880s engines, waiting a train coming out of Frankfort. Another photo shows the original yards and two houses at South Frankfort.

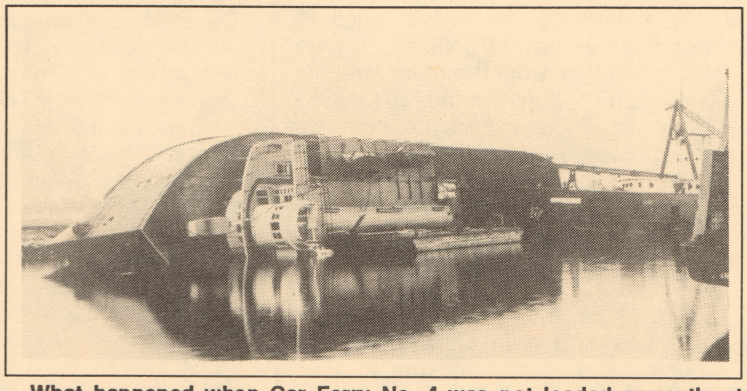
"One of the houses belonged to Edmund Chambers, assistant secretary of war under Stanton in Lincoln's administration. He knew Ashley but wouldn't let the railway cross his property to get to the proposed site for the car ferries.

"They had a big battle over that. Finally they sent Chambers a notice to go to Cadillac for a court hearing. While he was gone they built the tracks across his yard."

"is the only Ann Arbor car I've ever seen with this particular shape herald on the side of the car."

"Around 1898 they bought an 0-6-0 engine for switching. It had no lead truck and no trailing truck. It lasted on the railroad until the 1920s.

"When they decided they needed a third boat they went to their first all steel one. They used the boilers and engines from the bow thrusters removed from the first two boats. No. 3 went into service in January 1899.



What happened when Car Ferry No. 4 was not loaded correctly at Manistique with heavy iron ore cars. It happened May 29, 1909.

"In the mid-1890s they opened up a route to Gladstone. From then to 1902 is the only time they had five car ferry routes. The routes are listed on a different version of the key herald-- Manitowoc, Kewanee, Menominee and Gladstone.

"Gladstone was up a river and it got iced up. The boats would get locked in there so they finally shifted over to Manistique. The car ferries were the only boats that would go out all winter long."

A rare color map showed all five routes including Gladstone. You could also see the line from Durand up to Bay City. Although they sold that line to the Grand Trunk about 1890 it was still on the map. (A lot of map makers were slow to update back then.)

A 1901 railroad pass pictured car ferry No. 3 and had Harry Ashley's signature. He was assistant president and general manager with Burt until 1902. Both remained on the Board of Directors until 1904.

"At Frankfort there was a long 'bulk-break' building used by other ships. They took the bulk freight out of the ships, broke it down and reloaded it into box cars. It was a very expensive process to transfer bulk commodities from railcars to ships and then transfer them back into railcars.

"If you had a car ferry you just put the railcar in and go across. You take out two sets of labor and time delay."

As box cars got taller they couldn't get them in so they cut the aft deck of car ferries Nos. 1 and 2 down. That left them wide open to the sea at back. They had canvas that they could throw over but it was still pretty dangerous. Later they added sea gates to all the car ferries.

" Boats No. 1 and 2 had no pilot houses. The captain had to stand up on a ladder in all kinds of weather. He had cords in either hand, attached to a left and a right whistle and he would have to pull one or the other to let the engineer know which way to go to back the car into the slip.

"The railroad started to build a huge hotel at Frankfort in 1899. It was intended to rival the Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island. The Grand had been built by railroad interests in 1887.

"When the Frankfort hotel was half built, a windstorm came off the lake and blew the whole thing down. They rebuilt. It was 100 feet wide and 500 feet long--that's one and two thirds football fields long. It faced Lake Michigan and was called the Royal Frontenac Hotel.

"The hotel finally opened in 1901. They ran it year around at first but soon discovered that no one wanted to go up there in the wintertime.

RAILROAD HAULED JUST ABOUT EVERYTHING

"A comparative statement of classification and tonnage for 1901 and 1902 lists commodities the Ann Arbor Railroad was hauling.

They listed grain, flour, other mill products, hay, tobacco, cotton, fruit and vegetables, sugar beets, livestock, dressed meat, other packing house products, poultry, game, fish, wool, hides, leather, anthracite coal, bituminous coal, coke, ore, sand, stone and other like articles.

It continues with lumber, logs, charcoal, shingles, petroleum and other oils, sugar, staves and heading, pig iron, bloom iron, iron and steel rails, other castings and machinery, bar and sheet metal, cement, brick, lime and agricultural implements.

Also wagons, carriages, tools, wines, liquor, and beer, household goods, furniture, dairy products, salt, ice, merchandise and miscellaneous other commodities not mentioned above.

"Car Ferry No. 3 and later ferries had grain holds and commodity holds. I think they could hold 22,000 bushels of grain. That helped stabilize the boat." Grain towers built by the railroad were visible in Frankfort harbor scenes.

"A picture of boat No. 3 leaving Elberta shows the old Coast Guard station. The railroad bought it and the Coast Guard built another one behind the hotel. The railroad moved the old Coast Guard building and it became the car ferry headquarters and ticket office. The building is still there.

"A white building at the side of the hotel was a bowling alley. It was moved 90 degrees onto Main Street and still exists. We held our Ann Arbor Railroad Technical and Historical Association annual meeting there a couple of years ago.

"Engine No. 10 one of the Rogers 4-4-0s, was sent up to Frankfort with one car and became known as the 'Ping Pong'. It would go back and forth from the hotel to Crystal Lake.

One view showed the Royal Frontenac Hotel and another hotel Dan stayed in when he worked for the railroad as a brakeman, also visible were the Coast Guard station and the passenger boat Northland that brought people from Chicago and Milwaukee.

Another view showed a famous 1902 excursion train wreck. The train had 700 people on it and was headed to the newly opened Royal Frontenac. No one was killed, but 11 were seriously injured.

"I'm not sure of the cause of this wreck. I have seen evidence of other wrecks caused by everything from a bull or Model T on the track to just bad wheel bearings or broken rail. Its another area to research.

The Huron River bridge at Ann Arbor went down about 4:15 p.m. January 12, 1904. It was caused by a bad bearing--this I know. Four thousand people came out to see this wreck, hundreds with cameras. There are lots of pictures of this wreck.

"Newspaper articles say that when they tried to get the cars out of the ice they put chains around them and were cranking them up with their old flat car with a crane on it.

"While lifting a tank car, the chains rubbed on something, spilled naphtha and set the place afire. It also burned a lot of the other wrecked cars.

"The only thing left connecting the bridge was one girder. It cost them over $50,000 to fix the bridge, raise the equipment, replace the value of lost goods, replace burned cars and the cost of buying track running rights on other railroads to get around the wreck.

"You could see commodities just sitting on the ice so people were having a field day looting. They actually had it repaired in a few days. The present heavier bridge was built around 1910.

"In the 1970s they had the water level lowered to make repairs on the dam. I went down and you could see the water line on the concrete pillars. Barrels from the old metal bridge and wood trestle pilings were just cut and are there today, just a foot or so under the water. That is why there are signs saying not to dive off the bridge or go swimming."

A rare picture looking north on North Main near the Art Train shows old interchange tracks that are still there.

"On December 7, 1906 new boat No. 4 arrived at Elberta. It was their unlucky boat but it was used by the railroad until 1937 when it was sold to the Straits of Mackinac

Authority and they used it before they built the Mackinac Bridge. The boat's name was changed to 'The City of Cheboygan.'"

He had a rare view of all four boats together at Frankfort. They also had smaller excursion boats to bring people to the hotel and also carried freight in the bottom. The Illinois was one of those.

"In 1907 the railroad got four 'Atlantic type 4-4-2 passenger engines with slide valves and, in 1909, a fifth 4-4-2 engine with piston valves. Those five were the main passenger engines until the end of steam.

"They also used some of the 4-6-0 'ten wheelers' occasionally on passenger trains. The 'Atlantics' were numbered 1610, 1611, 1612, 1613, and the piston valve engine was 1614.

A post card view showed a wreck at Milan December 9, 1907. John Philip Sousa's Band was on board.

"I have been in correspondence with Mr. Paul Bierley, Sousa biographer. He has indications Sousa was not on the train, that he had food poisoning. I have newspaper articles that say he was feeling better and was supposed to rejoin the band at Toledo.

"Ann Arbor newspaper microfilms say the engineer and fireman were severely injured and, also, two bandsmen were injured. The band did perform in Ann Arbor that night, whether under direction of Sousa or the great trumpeter, Herbert Clark.

"Boat No. 4 rolled over when it was loaded incorrectly on May 29, 1909. The standard procedure is to put three cars in the center left-hand track, six cars in the right hand center track, then three more on the left center track to balance the boat out. They repeat the process with the outside tracks. They only sway the boat out by a factor of three cars. Also, you couldn't put all loaded cars in back and all empties in front *et cetera*.

"Instead of doing it the correct way, the boys at Manistique, in their infinite wisdom, tried to start loading the left outside track first.

"That would be fine and dandy most of the time except they were pushing in nine heavy iron ore cars. They thought they'd put three in and pull the other six out except the car ferry started rolling on them due to the weight of those nine cars. An iron ore car's coupler broke, leaving the iron ore cars on the outside track, causing boat No. 4 to roll over and capsize.

"They had to make a coffer dam and pump her out. They had to take the metal plates off the right hand side of the boat and bring cranes in and haul the iron ore cars out. They had a mess.

"In 1905 the D.T.& I. (Detroit, Toledo and Ironton) took over. They bought the stock and had control of the Ann Arbor Railroad until 1909 when anti-trust law changes made them divest themselves of the Ann Arbor.

"Wellington R. Burt and Harry Ashley stayed on the railroad until the D.T. & I. takeover. Burt was president until 1902, then he stayed on the board along with Harry Ashley. After 1904 both men are gone.

Steam Engine No. 46 with freight train chugging along near Chilson *circa* 1909

"Just by accident, I was paging through an industrial book in Toledo and I found that Harry Ashley had become president of a manual training school there. A picture of him was in the book.

"The U-M has 86 years of annual reports of the railroad sitting in storage. They are getting brittle so the Ann Arbor Railroad Technical and Historical Association paid to microfilm all of them. The microfilm is now available at the U-M Graduate Library.

"Ashley built this railroad and, except for Ann Arbor, missed every major city in the state. The reason he did was Toledo was a major port. They shipped a lot of commodities down there and he was tapping into Michigan's products, especially grain, produce, livestock and timber.

"When he was selling stock, he said they would haul forest products, grain, everything he could bring in. It was actually very profitable during that time.

"In the early 1900s, an Ann Arbor engine and a D.T. & I. engine met head-on near Hamburg. They didn't explode though boilers often would. If a steam pipe breaks loose in the cab, you get about 150-160 pounds of pressure of scalding steam. Engineers and firemen don't fare too well in those wrecks.

"In 1908 they built a union depot in Dundee with the Canada Southern. There was a brick works in back of the Azalia Station owned by the family of Henry Burger, formerly of Milan, a member of our railroad historical association.

"Chilson (Livingston County) and Yuma (Wexford County) have depots similar to Azalia.

"In the 1890s they built a passenger depot in Toledo, now gone, that lasted up until the end of passenger service. It was called the Cherry Street Station. The Ann Arbor pennant used after the Wabash took over could be seen in a window."

Dan pointed out cattle guards to keep cattle off the track in a view of the Hamburg depot. A member of the audience said someone had bought the Hamburg depot and made a home of it along M-36.

"In 1908 or '09 the Ann Arbor bought up the Manistique and Northern and changed it into the Manistique and Lake Superior. They controlled this line until 1968. Some of the Ann Arbor's used equipment would go up there and be labeled 'M. & L.S.

"On March 8, 1910, boat No. 1 caught fire and burned at Manitowoc, Wisconsin.

"Around 1911 they built a new depot at Owosso to replace the old wooden one. The old site is now a used car lot."

After J.M.A., Jr., was bounced out of the railroad he was involved in hydro-electric construction according to a book Dr. McClary found in the Toledo Library. He also did some gold exploration, Dan said.

"They had a passenger train wreck at Elsie January 28, 1911. The same crane on flat car that they used to lift cars up on the Huron River Bridge was at Elsie. It was a hand-cranked crane with chains.

"In 1912 they bought a steam crane that still exists. It is parked up at Owosso next to the shops and is now privately owned and is the crane I was leaning on in 1969 at the wreck site in Ann Arbor. That crane became the last steam engine operated by the Ann Arbor Railroad.

"The Toledo, Ann Arbor and Jackson, no relation to our railroad, started building a line out of Toledo up to Petersburg and they were going to compete with the Ann Arbor as an interurban line.

"Down on Platt Road, north of Stony Creek, on the east side, you can see some concrete bridge abutments at the creeks with no bridges over them. They were this company's.

"This other railroad ran with steam later on. It was called the 'Ragweed Line.'

"With this competition coming up in the form of, originally, an interurban the Ann Arbor came up with McKeen Motor Cars, basically gasoline, self-propelled interurban cars." He showed one just arriving at Howell May 16, 1911.

"They had five of them. They came across on the boat to Elberta. The executives went up in their private car and had their car attached to the back end of the McKeen Car. It wasn't designed to pull cars. They burned out the clutch on the Boon Hill between Frankfort and Cadillac.

"Once the Ann Arbor put the McKeen Cars on, that killed the Ragweed line's extension to Ann Arbor. Typically, the Ann Arbor ran four of the five McKeen Cars and rotated the fifth in for routine maintenance or kept it on reserve.

"A guy named 'Brownie', Harold Brown of Owosso, started in 1917 working on those cars and he lasted 50 years to 1967. I was talking to him last year when he was 92. He could remember things like yesterday.

"I had an advertisement for Splitdorf spark plugs from the McKeen cars. He couldn't see the picture--he said he is 43 percent blind. I just challenged him a little. I said do you remember what kind of spark plugs they used?"

"He said 'Splitdorf.' He didn't even hesitate.

"He described how they started the McKeen cars. They had six cylinders. They started three cylinders on air. They'd get them spinning, then they'd inject gasoline, get the other three cylinders firing on gas, then they'd shut the air off and inject gas into the first three.

"In 1918 they converted them to kerosene burning carburetors. Then they used air to get them spinning, a small tank of gas to get them firing on gas. Once they got the engine warmed up they would convert over to kerosene. Kerosene was cheaper. They ran them until December 31, 1924.

"The motor car house at the depot in Ann Arbor is gone but shows up on Sanborn Fire Insurance maps for Ann Arbor. It says 'motor car house' right across from the depot. We've never seen a picture of that. We're looking for it."

He showed a picture of the Howell depot with its motor car shed. "We assume it was similar architecture."

He showed motor car No. 4 at Cohoctah from the state archives. The McKeen cars had a metal cover over the headlight in the daytime.

"McKeen was the Union Pacific's master mechanic and he invented them. Most of them had round portholes, for windows, part of unibody construction. The Ann Arbor wanted lift windows so theirs were pretty distinctive.

The McKeen cars were used a lot by ladies to go shopping in other towns. The women sat in back. The front section was a smoker for men.

"They could do about 45 miles per hour. They were known to get up to 50 or 55.

"I was asking Brownie for tales about these cars. Once, he said, one hit a Model T Ford. At first, they couldn't find the guy in the Model T. He was up on the McKeen Car roof, dead. An engineer put his foot down on the exposed gears and lost his foot.

"Brownie also worked on those 4-4-0 1880s steam engines like No. 10 In the 1950s they sent him to the Alco (American Locomotive Company) plant for the Ann Arbor Railroad's first diesel freight road engines. (They had diesel switchers since 1941.)He was with the railroad in 1964 when the D.T. & I. took over He retired in 1967. Those diesels are still running today on the Tuscola and Saginaw Bay Railroad."

Dan showed a parlor-observation-cafe car that the railroad got in 1911 to use in their excursion service up to the hotel.

"In 1912 the hotel caught fire and burned to the ground.

"There's a great poem about people looting the hotel while it was on fire and the sheriff and Ann Arbor Railroad detective coming up and hauling them in."

Dan found a postcard view of boat No. 5 in the Toledo Library. It was called "the Bull of the Woods. It was the best ice breaker of the bunch."

"You can see in the photo it's throwing up bow waves on the ice and here are these idiots out on the ice a few feet from the boat's path.

"The new president of the Ann Arbor railroad after the D.T. & I's control ended in 1909 was Newman Erb of New York. He was president until 1924.

"Boat No. 5 was launched November 26, 1910 and went into service January 11, 1911. In 1912 boat No. 2 was taken out of service. It was sold twice, finally to a scrap dealer who converted it into a barge.

"In 1913 a man named J.E. Osmer became superintendent of motor power. He was only in the annual reports one year. I don't know if he died or what happened, but north of Ann Arbor there is Osmer's siding.

"In 1913 they started getting some metal, center sill under framed cars. This is the first car I've seen without the key herald on it.

"Brownie said sometime around 1913-14, three or four years before he came on the railroad, they got rid of the symbol. I don't know if it was just to cut costs or was a corporate change.

"The Ann Arbor today, headquartered at Howell, still has some old stationery with the key herald on it in their records."

On a *circa* 1915 map, the branch up to Saginaw and Bay City is not highlighted any more and they are down to four car ferry routes. "That's pretty much the way it stayed until they started winding down the car ferries."

A ten wheeler engine by the Hoover Plant in Ann Arbor was "typical of what they used for back-up passenger service and as pushers."

"Harold Allen in town took some movies in the forties and they are now being transferred onto video. Our association then will have a silent movie of Ann Arbor steam passengers in this area.

"It will also show the ten wheelers pushing a freight train up the hill toward Osmer siding. Oddly, they pushed backwards, the tender against the caboose. That's so, when they cut off, they'd be heading forward down the track toward the grade crossing in town.

"Then they bought two 0-8-0s, numbers 1520 and 1521. They didn't last long on the Ann Arbor--the Wabash took them down to Moberley, Missouri.

"Then they bought a bunch of 2-8-0s--four of this series ended up at Fort. Eustis, Virginia in the Army in the 1950s. I actually called Fort Eustis and talked to a sergeant who started there about 1957-58. He didn't remember these engines there at that time. About the only chance of an Ann Arbor steam road engine still existing is if they were sold to Korea or someplace else (excepting of course the steam crane).

"There's a heavier 2-8-0--they had three or four of these. The boiler on them was huge. They had spool-type piston valves that look almost like a hand bar bell.

"Then they bought the series of 2-8-2s in the World War I era. They were renumbered later. Another series of them came in 1923.

"In 1917 the United States government took control of all railroads in the U.S. The management was still there but they couldn't make much of a move without government approval. That lasted until 1920."

In a picture of Armistice Day 1918 down in Toledo the Ann Arbor and Pere Marquette Railroad boys are celebrating and waving American flags.

"In 1919 they bought the largest engines they ever owned--2-10-2s--but because of the long wheelbase on them, they ran them only on the east end of the line from Owosso to Toledo. Some of the curves were a little too sharp up on the west end. In mid-World War II they were sold to the Kansas City Southern.

"On November 3, 1919, Big Jim's son, James, Jr., the battling mail obstructor, passed away.

"On Valentine's Day 1923, boat No. 4 was taking on water in the aft end in a raging winter storm. The captain tried desperately to get her back to Elberta. He actually made it right to the edge of the breakwater when a side wave hit him and swamped him, but he got everybody back alive. They pumped her out and got her going again.

"In 1925 the Wabash took control. President Newman Erb had died the year before and Jules S. Bache took over for that one year. Now they got a new symbol, the

WHITE STRIPE 'KITTY' CAUSES PANIC STOP

"Sometimes animals run down the top of the rail and at night their eyes reflect light. One night in 1969 we saw little glowing lights on the track just after leaving Owosso. As we got closer we saw a white stripe.

"Whoosh, the engineer hit the air brake. (If you put a train into emergency you can sometimes jam the cars together, damage goods, break couplers, and even cause a derailment. But usually it takes about a mile to stop a train.)

"It didn't do us any good. It was a long ride that night. You could smell skunk all over the engines. The next morning at Elberta, we took our clothes off, put them in a barrel in the roundhouse and burned them. We showered and used clothes from our suitcases. When I went to the little hotel across the harbor in Frankfort I could still smell the engines over in Elberta.

flag which the Wabash used. Wabash control lasted until 1963.

"Car ferry No. 6 was not like the other Ann Arbor car ferries because it was built for the Toronto, Hamilton and Buffalo. While it was being built their traffic diminished and they decided they did not need it. The Ann Arbor bought it.

"Charles Ashley died November 12, 1925 and Harry Ashley April 11, 1927.

"My favorite boat, No. 7, was built around 1927 by Manitowoc Shipbuilding in Manitowoc, Wisconsin.

"The three major railroads that had car ferries, the Ann Arbor, the Grand Trunk and C. & O. (Chesapeake and Ohio), decided to cut costs and they got together with a basic common design.

"The three Grand Trunk boats--the Grand Haven, City of Milwaukee and Madison were sisters of Ann Arbor No. 7 as well as Pere Marquette Nos. 21 and 22.

"Ann Arbor No. 7 later was converted into the Viking. I'm making a model of No. 7. The Grand Trunk's City of Milwaukee was later bought by the Ann Arbor and is still tied up at Elberta.

"The C. & O. boats are at Ludington. The one currently running out of there is the old Badger. The Viking and Arthur K. Atkinson (old No. 6) are scheduled to be converted into gambling boats for use on the Mississippi River."

Dan has a 1930 aerial view of the railroad shops at Owosso, one of the earliest aerial views he has seen.

He showed engine No. 201, later No. 1611, at Milan in the 1930s or '40s.

"They had a guy in a crossing gate tower at Milan. They had a wreck and cars piled up all around that tower but didn't hit it. They said the guy was pretty much a bundle of nerves and he needed a new pair of shorts when he got done.

"The Milan depot is still there. They tore the tower down on May 26, 1992.

"I've got a 1949 annual report that says they were building a brand new redwood water tower at Milan. Within a year they quit running the steam engines."

"He called attention to block signals at Milan. They didn't dispatch the road by what they called block traffic control except in this one area and that was to coordinate the football special passenger trains.

"When I was on the railroad we still picked up written orders of what we had to do. Typically they did not have a crew diner on the train, they would stop at a town and eat at a restaurant close by.

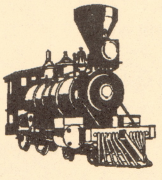
"The railroad actually made more money taking autos on ferries than they did freight cars. If they had more autos, they would take freight cars off."

A view of Ferry yard by Michigan Stadium showed it full of football special trains. If there were too many they would send them to Osmer siding or the Michigan Central, state hospital or Milan siding. The specials ran up into the 1960s. Dan has a picture of a Grand Trunk diesel football special by Michigan Stadium in 1969 or '70.

"In 1931 the Ann Arbor went into bankruptcy again. The Wabash executives were still on the board but they were under the control of the receivers, Mr. Pitcairn and Mr. Nicodemus. They were in receivership through 1943.

In 1941 they bought a diesel switcher from Whitcomb Locomotive Company which became their new No. 1 That engine still exists. They sold it to the Dundee Cement plant.

"They, in turn, sold it to the Toledo, Lake Erie and Western Railroad Museum in the Maumee area. It ran from Waterville to Grand Rapids, Ohio, on part of the old Nickel Plate track. They still have it and are restoring it.



"When the railroad came out of bankruptcy in 1943, Arthur K. Atkinson of the Wabash became president and chairman. Then a Tom K. Smith became chairman but Atkinson remained as president until 1959 when they named boat No. 6 for him when it was remodeled.

"The last regular passenger train on the Ann Arbor ran July 19, 1950, from Ann Arbor to Toledo. They called trains heading eastbound to Toledo the Torpedo and the westbound, the Frankfort Fireball.

"Usually, passenger trains had priority over freight trains but if the freight train was too long for the siding, the passenger train would 'take the hole' as they say.

"In December 1950 they replaced the steam freight engines with diesel matched pairs of what they called Alco F A, (Freight A) units, meaning it had a cab with engineers control. If square on each end it was a B unit. The Ann Arbor never had B units.

"The cabooses originally were all red sides with silver roofs. Later on they painted the ends yellow."

BARN RESTORATION TO BE MARCH 19 TOPIC

Ted Micka will talk about "Barn Restoration in Washtenaw and Neighboring Counties" at 2 p.m. Sunday, March 19, at Bentley Library.

ARTIFACTS TO DONATE?

Anyone wishing to donate an artifact to WCHS should contact Nancy McKinney, collections chairman, at 665-5171 or by mail, 1104 West Madison , Ann Arbor, MI 48103. The Society welcomes donations that fit into our museum's mission and storage space limitations.

HISTORY HAPPENINGS

Salem Historical Society: Bus trip to Amherstburg, Ontario Saturday, February 25, to visit the North American Black History Museum and Cultural Centre during Black History Month.

Bus to leave Salem township hall at 9 a.m., return at 5 p.m. They will visit and lunch under the lemon trees in Colasantis tropical gardens at Ruthven first.

Webster Society: Dessert Theater 8 p.m. February 9, 10, 11 at Webster Community House. John Pugh Gardner and Julie Vorus will perform the Broadway play, "Love Letters" by A.R. Gurney to benefit the society. For reservations/tickets ($5 each) call 761-3817 or 426-5179.

19TH CENTURY ANN ARBOR JEWISH FAMILIES MOVED ON

In response to Fay Woronoff's talk last fall on the Washtenaw Jewish Community, Helen Aminoff shared some information she found about local Jewish history in the 19th century when there had seemed to be a gap.

Her research documented that Ann Arbor had the first Jewish cemetery in Michigan on the present Rackham Building site. It provided the basis for erection of a state historical marker at the corner of Huron and Fletcher.

She found that there had been a viable Jewish community in Ann Arbor from the early 1840s to the 1880s that had disappeared or moved on so that, when the Lanskys came in 1895 and the Zwerdlings came around the turn of the century no one seemed to know anything about them.

The last of those earlier Jewish families in Ann Arbor were the Fantles, listed in the city directory of 1883-84.

Helen's article on "The First Jews of Ann Arbor" was published in the January 1983 Michigan Jewish History, official publication of the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan.

Those buried in the first Jewish Cemetery were re-interred at Forest Hill in 1900. Moving them again to Beth Israel Memorial Gardens, an enclave in Arborcrest Cemetery, was considered but rejected.

Buried in Forest Hill are members of the Guiterman, Marx, Weidenfeld and Weil Families. The area is marked off by plantings donated by Margolis Nursery.

CHRISTMAS SOCIAL FUN, BENEFITS WCHS BY $217

President Patricia Austin's house was gloriously decorated from one end of the house to the other for her Christmas fund raiser social December 17, attended by about 60 persons.

Pauline Walters

The display of her personal toys, dolls and dollhouse, completely furnished down to the washing machine and patio furniture, was a highlight. The dollhouse furnishings were "original 1940s plastic."

Guests sipped ginger tea and hot cider and sampled Christmas cookies during the afternoon of Christmas remembering.

Donations totaled $217.50 to benefit the museum.

Sondra Herold

Volunteer hostesses were Merilyn Goetz, Sondra Herold, Virginia Hills, Mildred Leidheiser and Pauline Walters.

Bets Hansen, Elizabeth Dusseau and Esther Warzynski staffed the portable museum shop.

CERTIFICATES OFFERED

Hand lettered certificates are offered free of charge, framed if desired, by WCHS to organizations for milestone anniversaries. Information: 663-8826.

MUSEUM SHOP CLEARS $362 IN HOLIDAY SALES

WCHS's portable museum shop, presided over by Bets Hansen and her helpers, cleared $362.23 in Christmas season sales to benefit the Society.

The shop sold at Kerrytown's open house November 20, at Little Professor Books December 10 and 11 and at President Pat Austin's house tour and doll exhibit December 17.

Many thanks to Lesley Gresham, Kerrytown manager, Kay Walsh, Little Professor manager and their staffs. Special thanks to the Museum Shop Advisory Committee: Elizabeth Dusseau, Thelma Graves and Esther Warzynski, and the other volunteers: Judy Chrisman, Hilda Kurtz, Maya Savarino, Arlene Schmid and Alice Ziegler.

HOW TO JOIN

Send name, address and phone number with check or money order payable to: WCHS Membership, c/o Patty Creal, Treasurer, P.O. Box 3336, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-3336.

Annual dues are: individual, $15; couple/family, $25; student or senior (60+), $10; senior couple (one 60+), $19; business/association, $50; patron, $100. Information: 662-9092.

1885 WEDDING DRESS DONATED TO WCHS

A black, silk taffeta wedding dress worn by a petite 19th century Ann Arbor bride has been given to WCHS by her grandson, Russell M. Dunnaback of Howell.

Mary Weinmann Vogel (1858-1931) was married to Martin Philip Vogel in 1885. Both were born and lived in Ann Arbor. An Ann Arbor seamstress made the dress, a size three or four. Martin Vogel died in 1906.

After his death, Mary purchased a house at 217 West Huron and ran a boarding house. With the help of her children she served 40 boarders three meals a day except only two on Sunday. The boarders were U-M students and businessmen. Some of her descendants still live in Ann Arbor.

WCHS HAS 77% OF POINTS FOR ACID-FREE BOXES

Thanks to all who are saving Bill Knapp's Restaurant points for us, WCHS has 77 percent of its goal of 13,860 points for acid-free boxes and paper to store textiles in its collection. We now have 10,703 points.

Anyone who eats at Knapp's may request a yellow points slip from the cashier each time, with one point given for each dollar spent. Please keep collecting and give or send to Alice Ziegler, 537 Riverview Dr., Ann Arbor, MI 48104.

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WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

'BLACKS TO BE REMEMBERED'

2:00 P.M. • SUNDAY FEBRUARY 19, 1995

YPSILANTI HISTORICAL MUSEUM
220 N. HURON STREET
YPSILANTI, MICHIGAN

WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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